

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

L-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 SSC-01 PC-01 AGR-05 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01

OMB-01 SAM-01 FEA-01 CEA-01 /109 W

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R 071210Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 202

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 1840

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PFOR, SU, EG

SUBJECT: POLITICAL SHIFTS IN SUDAN

REF: KHARTOUM 1732

BEGIN SUMMARY: RECENT AND IMPENDING SHIFTS IN KHARTOUM POWER
STRUCTURE POINT TO ASCENDANCY OF NATIONALIST, PRO-EGYPTIAN
ELEMENTS AND RECONSTITUTION OF 1969 INNER CIRCLE LESS THE
LEFTIST. IT APPEARS THAT NIMEIRI GUIDED BY URGENT DESIRE
PLEASE EGYPTIANS AND POTENTIAL ARAB DONORS. IF HE IS ALSO
ATTEMPTING PROTECT HIMSELF FROM IMAGINED THREAT FROM LEFT,
HE MAY NOW FIND HIMSELF FORCED TO LOOK OVER BOTH SHOULDERS
AT ONCE. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING ON RECENT RETURN TO POWER OF REVOLUTIONALRY

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COMMAND COUNCIL (RCC) MEMBERS KHALID HASSAN ABBAS AND MAMOUN

AWAD ABU ZAID (REFTEL) AUGUST 5 SAW THE ARRIVAL IN TOWN OF MAJOR ABUL GASSIM HASHIM, ONLY LIVING MILITARY RDD MEMBER STILL ON THE OUTSIDE. WE UNDERSTAND HE IS ABOUT TO BE APPOINTED BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI TO THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE SUDAN SOCIALIST UNION (SSU) AND NAMED AS "COUNSELLOR FOR PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS." SOLE CIVILIAN RCC MEMBER AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER BABIKER AWADALLAH ALSO RETURNED TO KHARTOUM WITHIN PAST FEW DAYS AND, RUMOR HAS IT, WILL BE GIVEN SENIOR POSITION. ABBAS, IT IS SAID, MAY REPLACE FIRST VICE PRESIDENT MOHAMMED AL-BAGHIR AHMED. FINALLY, AHMED AL-SAYED HAMID OF THE STRONGLY PRO-EGYPTIAN KHATMIYYA SECT, JUST RETURNED FROM CAIRO, IS REPORTEDLY SLATED FOR APPOINTMENT AS MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE.

2. MEANWHILE, SSU FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND MINISTER OF INDUSTRY BADR AL-DIN SULEIMAN DROPPED OUT OF SIGHT TWO WEEKS AGO AND IS PRESUMED DOOMED TO DISMISSAL. MOST POPULAR EXPLANATION HERE INVOLVES REPRINT IN DAILY "AL AYAM," OF WHICH SULEIMAN CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, OF FOREIGN PRESS STORY CONCERNING NORTHROP PAYOFFS TO SAUDI BUSINESSMEN AND NIMEIRI ASSOCIATE ADNAN KASHOGGI. SULEIMAN REPORTEDLY HAD THE BAD JUDGMENT TO SHOW THE STORY TO NIMEIRI ONLY TO SEE THE LATTER CRUMPLE IT IN A RAGE AND THROW IT TO THE GROUND.

3. OTHER CABINET CHANGES ARE IN THE WIND AS WELL. MANSOUR KHALID, WHOSE DAYS AS MINISTER OF EDUCATION (SINCE HIS REMOVAL FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY) HAVE ALWAYS BEEN NUMBERED, IS APPARENTLY ON THE WAY OUT, AS IS MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION, SOUTHERNER BONA MALWAL RING. FINALLY, MINISTER OF PEOPLES' LOCAL GOVERNMENT KARRAR AHMED KARRAR HAS SEEMINGLY VANISHED FROM THE LOCAL SCENE.

4. IT IS WIDELY KNOWN IN KHARTOUM, THAT, ON THE EVE OF PRESIDENT SADAT'S JULY 26-27 VISIT, UP TO FORTY OLD NUP AND UMMA POLITICIANS, INCLUDING SENIOR PARTY OFFICIALS AND FORMER MINISTERS, WERE ARRESTED FOR HAVING DISTRIBUTED ANTI-REGIME AND ANTI-EGYPTIAN LEAFLETS SIGNED "NATIONAL FRONT."

5. NOT AS WELL SUBSTANTIATED IS A REPORT THAT THE LIBYAN EMBASSY HERE ALSO CHURNED OUT LEAFLETS FOR DISTRIBUTION PRIOR

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TO SADAT'S ARRIVAL, BUT THAT GOS LEARNED OF SCHEME IN ADVANCE AND PICKED UP WOULD-BE SUDANESE DISTRIBUTORS AS SOON AS LATTER HAD PICKED UP LEAFLETS FROM LIBYANS. IT IS WORTH MENTIONING IN THIS CONNECTION THAT WHEN COL. QADDAFI STOPPED RECENTLY AT KHARTOUM AIRPORT FOR REFUELING EN ROUTE FROM KAMPALA TO TRIPOLI, HE WAS SO ENRAGED THAT GREETING PARTY HEADED MERELY BY SSU DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE ABUL GASSIM MOHAMMED IBRAHIM THAT HE REFUSED TO

LEAVE AIRCRAFT AND DENIED ENTRANCE TO ALL SUDANESE EXCEPT
IBRAHIM. (NIMEIRI WAS STILL IN KAMPALA AT TIME, BUT FIRST
VICE PRESIDENT WAS PRESUMABLY IN TOWN.)

6. THE CHANGING POLITICAL SCENE TAKES ON ADDED INTEREST
WHEN VIEWED AGAINST THE RATHER GLUM FINANCIAL PICTURE
CURRENTLY FACING GOS (KHARTOUM 1824 NOTAL). ON TOP OF
THAT, WE NOTE THAT BOTH SUGAR AND COOKING OIL DISAPPEARED FROM
THE MARKET SEVERAL DAYS AGO, A SITUATION THAT
SUDANESE HAVE NOT LONG TOLERATED WITHOUT PROTEST IN THE PAST.
ANOTHER POTENTIAL SOURCE OF DISCONTENT: SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE
BEING TOLD FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT FREE LUNCHES WILL NOT BE
FURNISHED IN SCHOOL, THAT THEY WILL HAVE TO BUY THEIR OWN
COPY BOOKS, THAT TEXTS ARE IN SHORT SUPPLY, AND THAT UNIFORMS
WILL NOW BE OPTIONAL, CLOTH BEING SHORT SUPPLY.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KHARTOUM 1840

7. COMMENT. THE RETURN TO POWER OF THE RCC (LESS THE THREE

COMMUNISTS EXECUTED IN 1971) SPELLS THE CONTINUATION OF CLEARLY DISCERNIBLE TRENDS IN SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY: IN PARTICULAR, THE TIGHTENING OF TIES WITH EGYPT ACCOMPANIED BY ABANDONMENT OF HOPE THAT LIBYA WILL BE OF ANY HELP TO SUDAN; AND IDENTIFICATION OF GOS WITH MODERATE ARABS ABROAD IN GENERAL, ACCOMPANIED BY THE HOPE THAT THIS STANCE WILL ENCOURAGE CONSERVATIVE OIL STATES TO PART WITH ENOUGH FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO GET GOS OUT OF AN INCREASINGLY PRECARIOUS FINANCIAL BIND. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE NOTE THAT BOTH MOMOUN BEHEIRY, MINISTER OF FINANCE AND NATIONAL ECONOMY, AND (UNBEKNOWNST TO BEHEIRY) BAHHA AL-DIN MOHAMMED IDRIS, MINISTER OF STATE FOR SPECIAL AFFAIRS, JUST RETURNED FROM MISSIONS TO JIDDA, RESULTS UNKNOWN. WE WONDER WHETHER IDRIS WAS NOT SENT TO LEARN WHETHER THE PLANNED CHANGES WOULD OPEN SAUDI COFFERS.

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8. A CAUTIONARY REMARK IS IN ORDER WITH RESPECT TO THE REPORTEDLY PRO-EGYPTIAN ATTITUDES OF ALL THE RE-EMERGENT RCC MEMBERS: THEY ARE ALSO ALL KNOWN AS PRAGMATIC NATIONALISTS, AND THEIR FOREIGN PREFERENCES COULD EASILY SHIFT WITH CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF WHERE SUDAN'S (OR THEIR OWN) INTERESTS LIE. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS COMMONLY BELIEVED THAT THE APPOINTMENTS OF ABBAS AND ABU ZAID WERE TIMED TO PLEASE SADAT.

9. SHOULD ALL OR MOST OF THE REPORTED CHANGES TAKE PLACE - AND RUMORS HAVE A GOOD TRACK RECORD IN KHARTOUM - WE CAN EXPECT A REACTION BOTH IN THE SOUTH AND AMONG NORTHERNERS FOREVER WARY OF EGYPTIAN DOMINATION. SECONDLY, BASED ON OUR KNOWLEDGE OF PAST RELATIONSHIPS, WE CAN LOOK FOR A STRUGGLE OF SORTS BETWEEN TWO GROUPS: ONE LED BY ABBAS, ABU ZAID AND ZEIN AL-ABDEIN MOHAMMED AHMED ABDEL GADIR, A TIGHT TRIO IN RCC DAYS; AND THE OTHER BY ABUL GASSIM MOHAMMED IBRAHIM AND ABUL GASSIM HASHIM, BLOOD RELATIVES AND ALLIES. ABBAS IS SAID TO HAVE MAINTAINED CLOSE CONTACT WITH MILITARY CIRCLES DURING HIS LONG ABSENCE FROM GOVERNMENT AND TO HAVE RETAINED THE LOYALTY OF A SIZEABLE NUMBER OF OFFICERS. (WE ARE TOLD THAT THOSE SENIOR OFFICERS PENSIONED OFF ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO-SEE KHARTOUM A-62 OF JUNE 16, 1975 NOTAL - WERE AND ARE POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS OF ABBAS.)

10. WE HAVE ALREADY SUGGESTED ONE POSSIBLE REASON WHY NIMEIRI IS PLAYING A STRONG ARAB HAND, I.E., TO PLEASE SADAT AND PRY LOOSE MORE ARAB OIL MONEY. A SECOND POSSIBILITY IS A PERCEIVED NEED FOR A COUNTERWEIGHT TO AN IMAGINED "LEFTIST" THREAT FROM WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT, PERHAPS FROM SULEIMAN OR AHMED ABDEL HALIM, MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND SSU IDEOLOGUE. NIMEIRI IS OF COURSE ALSO CAPABLE OF PUTTING OUT THE STORY OF LEFTIST PRESSURE SIMPLY TO ELICIT SYMPATHY AND AID FROM EGYPT AND THE

GULF STATES (OR EVEN THE US). WE SUSPECT THAT NIMEIRI NEEDS
TO BE AS WARY OF HIS NEW MEN AS OF THE LEFT. THERE IS LIKELY
TO BE SOME PUSHING AND SHOVING AMONG THE NEW RESIDENTS
NOW ROAMING THE HALLS OF POWER.
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